

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGUI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6784

C O N F I D E N T I A L 0437

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, CT, US

SUBJECT: GOCAR SEEKS TO BURY HATCHET ON COUP ATTEMPT ALLEGATIONS

REF: (A) BANGUI 0276 (B) BANGUI 0270

1. TWENTY-FOUR PAGE SPECIAL EDITION OF "TA TENE" (TRUTH), NEWSPAPER OF CAR'S OLE POLITICAL PARTY MESAN HAS JUST APPEARED AND IS DEVOTED EXCLUSIVELY TO "THE ODIOUS ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT OF FEBRUARY 3.1 (REFTELS)

2. CONTENTS FEATURE PHOTOS OF MOST OF PERSONS CONVICTED IN ABORTIVE COUP D'ETAT; TEXTS OF GOCAR COMMUNIQUE WHICH FOLLOWED FEBRUARY 3 ATTACK AND FEBRUARY 13 MILITARY TRIBUNAL; AND DETAILS OF FINAL VERDICTS. EIGHTEEN PAGES ARE GIVEN OVER TO "MESSAGES OF SUPPORT" FROM INTERNATIONAL, NATIONAL AND LOCAL PERSONALITIES. PROMINENT AMONG THESE ARE MESSAGES FROM PRESIDENT FORD AND AMERICAN EMBASSY.

3. TA TENE REPEATS TEXT OF RADIO COMMENTARY BY PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SPOKESMAN VICTOR TETEYA (BANGUI 276) WHICH STATES THAT EMBASSY FSL MARC CLADO "WITHOUT HAVING BEEN ACCUSED VIGOROUSLY DENIED BEING CIA AGENT, TRYING TO PASS HIMSELF OFF AS CAR'S BEST FRIEND." GOVERNMENT COMMISSARIAT'S SUMMARY STATEMENT AT TRIAL IS ALSO CARRIED. IT REFERS TO CALDO FRIENDSHIP WITH PRINCIPAL PERPETRATOR, COMMANDANT OBROU, AND STATES THAT CALDO WAS "NOT ONLY AWARE" OF COUP PLOT BUT WAS ITS "INSTIGATOR." ACCORDING TO TA TENE, CALDO ENCOURAGED OBROU IN AFFAIR BY PROMISING
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TO OBTAIN "MILLIONS OF DOLLARS" FOR REALIZATION OF OBROU'S PROGRAM

SHOULD HE SUCCEED IN ELIMINATING BOKASSA AND HIS GOVERNMENT. PHOTO OF CALDO ON PAGE THREE CAPIONED "PAYMASTER".

4. HOWEVER, TA TENE SPECIAL EDITION ON WHOLE SEEMS TO BE MAKING EFFORT TO DOWNPLAY ANY AMERICAN ANGLE TO EVENTS OF FEBRUARY 3. THERE IS NO NEW ALLEGATION OR INFORMATION IN REGARD TO CALDO, USG OR CIA. INDEED, TA TENE DROPS ALL EARLIER TRIAL AND RADIO REFERENCES TO CALDO AS AMERICAN EMBASSY EMPLOYEE AND "DEPUTY FIRST ECONOMIC COUNSELOR" AT EMBASSY. NOR IS CALDO GROUPED AMONG THOSE FEATURED ON TITLE PAGE AS THE "BRAINS OF THE ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT."

5. THIS MESAN PARTY "STATEMENT" ON THE COUP ATTEMPT, TAKEN TOGETHER WITH OTHER INDICATIONS SUCH AS BOKASSA'S WARM RECEPTION OF THE AMBASSADOR AT HIS CREDENTIALS CEREMONY AND RECENT EMBASSY CONTACTS AT MINISTERIAL AND WORKING LEVELS, POINT TO APPARENT GOCAR DESIRE TO CLOSE THIS CHAPTER IN ITS HISTORY, INCLUDING ANY FURTHER ATTEMPT TO INVOLVE USG IN THESE EVENTS. WE WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR CLOSELY LOCAL DEVELOPMENTS FOR CONFIRMATION AS TO ACCURACY OF THIS IMPRESSION. FOR THE MOMENT, HOWEVER, IT WOULD SEEM THAT GOCAR IS GENUINELY INTERESTED IN BURYING WHATEVER HATCHET IT MAY AT ONE TIME HAVE BRANDISHED.
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